

CHINATOWN/LEATHER DISTRICT CENTRAL ARTERY ADVISORY COMMITTEE

**MEETING SUMMARY – PARCEL 24, MEETING #1, June 12, 2003
185 KNEELAND ST., CHINATOWN**

Stephanie Fan, Co-chair of the Chinatown / Leather District Central Artery Advisory Committee (CAC), welcomed everyone and explained that this CAC is the same group that is participating in the Parcel 23D park design. She introduced Dave Seeley, the Leather District co-chair, Steve Hines, Chief Development Officer, Massachusetts Turnpike Authority (MTA), Fred Yalouris (MTA), Bill Tuttle (MTA), Dick Garver, Boston Redevelopment Authority (BRA), Sue Kim (BRA), Yan Gao (BRA), and Kim Jones (BRA). Fan also outlined the next few meetings – this meeting was an introduction to the process and site, the next meeting (June 30th) would include zoning and planning context, and the third meeting would begin the discussion of what the community would like to see on Parcel 24.

Bill Tuttle, Deputy Director of Real Estate at MTA, showed the Parcel 24 site on the Central Artery's 3-D model. (The model is open for anyone to see at 185 Kneeland St. on the 1st floor between 9-5pm on weekdays.) He described the difference between what the site will look like compared to the existing conditions. Tuttle pointed out level changes from Hudson Street to Albany Street and talked about improving pedestrian connections through and around the site. He said the massing on Parcel 24 on the 3-D model was just a study by the MTA.

Steve Hines introduced himself and welcomed everyone to the first phase of the last steps to complete the Central Artery surface restoration. He said that MTA is committed to a community-oriented process and reiterated a commitment to housing for the community on the site. Tuttle will be the lead for the MTA in this process, which will also include Fred Yalouris.

Tuttle described some of the Parcel 24 site conditions:

- Existing retaining wall on Hudson St. to get moved further out to create Parcel 24.
- There's approximately a 20 to 25 ft. difference from Hudson St. to Albany St.
- Site is approximately 760ft. long, 97 ft. wide at Kneeland St. and 27 ft. near the southern end.
- There will be a sidewalk on the Albany St. side, to be built by the developer, as well as a noise barrier.
- Traffic on Albany Street will be similar to current conditions – at times heavy with traffic going towards the I-90 West and I-93 South.
- Albany Street rises and drops as it goes south creating a wall (up to 20 to 25 ft.) on the east side of the site.
- There will be a traffic light with a pedestrian phase at the intersection (mid-point) of the site at Albany Street and the South Station Connector.
- There is a c. 6 ft. sewer line that goes through the site – it's not clear what the construction restrictions will be from Boston Water & Sewer Commission.
- Parcel 24 is mostly owned by the MTA, although currently about 1/3 of the site is owned by Massachusetts Highway Department. Following the completion of the Central Artery, Mass. Highway will transfer their land back to MTA.

Fan introduced a film (produced by Asian Community Development Corp.) showing pictures of the site prior to the Artery and chronicling the stories of former residents.

Lydia Lowe, Director of the Chinese Progressive Association, provided a summary of the BRA's 1990 Chinatown Community Plan and the Chinatown Initiative's Chinatown Master Plan 2000. Points relevant to Parcel 24 include creating more housing (affordable), land bridges, open space, community facilities, and neighborhood economic development. The goal for whatever is developed on the site should be to strengthen the neighborhood. The zoning for Parcel 24 falls under the Chinatown Gateway Special Study Area, with an allowable height and density of 100 ft. and FAR of 7.

Dick Garver, Deputy Director of Infrastructure and Transportation Planning at the BRA, presented additional context around the site. The development of Parcel 24 is part of implementing Chinatown's Master Plan. The Boston 2000 Master Plan adopted by the BRA refers to Parcel 24 as primarily a

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housing site. The Civic Vision Plan for the Turnpike air rights parcels south of Marginal Road offers an opportunity for residential, commercial, and institutional growth of Chinatown. The whole south of Kneeland "Gateway" area will be another comprehensive planning study that bridges residential uses to economic growth opportunities. The planning process for the parcels south of Kneeland ("South Bay") will begin later this year and will definitely include involvement from Chinatown.

Tuttle gave an overview of the schedule and process for the disposition of Parcel 24 by the MTA. The disposition process will be an open, public process to include the MTA, City, and community. The disposition process will be a competitive one with a Request for Proposals (RFP). The City will take the lead for working with the community to create design and land use guidelines for the parcel as the first step in that process.

Disposition steps:

- Drafting and finalizing design and land use guidelines with Advisory Committee and community.
- MTA to draft Request for Proposals, including the finalized design and land use guidelines.
- RFP to be reviewed by Advisory Committee and community.
- RFP to be issued by MTA.
- Proposals to be distributed for review (not including financials).
- Development teams will present to the Advisory Committee and community (feedback to be obtained).
- MTA will hold private interviews regarding financial portion of the proposals.
- MTA will make final decision taking into account City's and community's comments.
- Selected development team would enter into 2 contracts. Initially there will be a development agreement to govern the permitting phase of the project. Upon successful completion of permitting and transfer of the MHD-owned portion of the site, a lease agreement will be executed.
- Under the development agreement, the development team will prepare a development plan – to undergo development review.
- After approvals and lease execution, construction will begin.

Tuttle explained that both Parcel 24 as well as the Parcel 25 – 27A sites will be subject to long-term leases and not land sales because a land sale would require the MTA to sell to the highest bidder instead based on development proposals. Typically the MTA enters into 99-year leases so they can have more control over the developers. Even with leased land, condominiums can be sold – it is complicated but has been done throughout the state (i.e., MTA's Charlestown property and the BRA's Navy Yard).

Questions:

- What happens to a condo after 99 years? (Possibility of an extension, but without another agreement, it would go back to the MTA.)
- Will there be a preference for a community-based developer? (It may be a consideration, but MTA may not require it.)
- What is the value of the land? (Value would be based on a developer's proposal.)
- How much of these community discussions will go into the RFP? (Assumed that the conceptual massing and fairly specific uses - design & development guidelines - will be generated from these meetings. Consensus will be sought, but remember that these are guidelines for developers to respond to. The rest of the RFP will include standard and technical information.)
- Will the developers' proposals be available for public viewing? (Yes, except for the financial section, which will remain confidential.)
- Will there be soil sampling on the site? (The MTA has done some sampling and the selected developer may do more.)
- How will decisions be made if there isn't community-wide consensus? (We are committed to trying to achieve consensus, but since this process will result in a set of guidelines, it may be possible to express varying points of views within the guidelines.)

The next Parcel 24 meeting will include presentations on zoning, existing historic guidelines, and the City's housing policy. The next Parcel 24 meeting will be on June 30, 2003 at 6:00PM at St. James Church with a "repeat" meeting on July 21, 2003 (place to be determined).